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ABSTRACT

The McDaniel Dating Questionnaire purports to measure four variables: reason for dating, orientation, commitment and behavior. A factor analysis of data collected from a sample of 34 single adults raised questions about the validity of this instrument. It was concluded that the questionnaire does not adequately distinguish among the variables. Specific recommendations for improvement are offered. (Author)

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Factor Analysis of the McDaniel Dating Questionnaire

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The report entitled "Associations between reasons for dating, orientation, commitment and behavior: verification of a study by McDaniel" (Gittman 1978) attributed lack of support for McDaniel's conclusions to ambiguity in the McDaniel measuring instrument. Such ambiguity was evidenced by high positive correlations between purportedly different levels within variables, and by high positive unpredicted correlations between certain variables.

Variables

The variables and levels of variables which were studied are as follow:

I. Reason for dating.

A. Recreational dating is dating for the purpose of enjoying oneself.

B. Mate selection dating is dating for the purpose of finding a suitable partner for a long-term relationship.

C. Anticipatory socialization dating is dating for the purpose of testing out what marriage with a particular person would be like.

II. Orientation

A. Peer orientation is the subject's receptivity to the opinions and values of friends.

B. Family orientation is the subject's receptivity to the opinions and values of family members.

C. Personal orientation is the subject's lack of receptivity to the opinions and values of friends or family members.

- III. Commitment indicates the degree to which one is willing to adjust one's own behavior to satisfy the date and also the degree to which one is willing to adjust the date's behavior to satisfy oneself.
- IV. Behavior refers to the manner with which one acts toward the date.
 - A. Assertive behavior is independent and selfish.
 - B. Assertive-receptive behavior is midway between independent and selfish on one extreme and dependent and pleasing on the other extreme.
 - C. Receptive behavior is dependent and intended to be pleasing to the date.

Sample

The questionnaire developed by McDaniel was administered to 34 volunteers at a singles' social. The subjects ranged in age from 28 to 50, with a mean age of 35.94 and a standard deviation of 9.75. Seven subjects had completed a high school education. Thirteen subjects had attended, but did not complete college. Eight subjects had college degrees. Five subjects had advanced degrees. The incomes of the subjects ranged from no income to \$200,000, with a median income of \$27,641.83. Fifteen subjects earned less than \$15,000. Twelve subjects earned between \$15,000 and \$30,000. Eight subjects earned more than \$30,000.

Design

Volunteers completed the questionnaire. Their responses were scored so that each subject achieved a score for recreational dating, mate selection dating, anticipatory socialization dating, peer orientation, family orientation, personal orientation, commitment, assertive behavior, assertive-receptive behavior and receptive behavior. A factor analysis was performed on the data for the purpose of determining the number of factors on the questionnaire and the

loading of each variable level on each factor.

Factor Analysis

The varimax rotated factor matrix for the variables is presented in Table I. The factor matrix showed four factors. Factor I correlated highest with peer orientation and with family orientation (.872 and .949 respectively). Personal orientation correlated negatively (-.994) with Factor I.

Factor II correlated highest with commitment and assertive behavior (.676 and .520 respectively). The Pearson correlation coefficient for commitment and assertive behavior was $r = .456$, sig. at .01. This positive significant correlation contradicts the McDaniel conclusion which would predict an inverse relationship between commitment and assertive behavior.

Factor III correlated highest with commitment and receptive behavior (.564 and .872 respectively). Both Factors II and III are correlated with commitment. Apparently there is some confounding of commitment with the behavioral variables of assertive behavior and receptive behavior.

Factor IV correlated highest with recreational dating, mate selection dating and anticipatory socialization (.487, .687 and .571 respectively). These all represent the variable of reason for dating and it is appropriate that they all load on one factor. However, it is curious that anticipatory socialization also loads to a considerable extent (.425) on Factor III. This indicates that there is some confounding of the level of anticipatory socialization with another variable.

The level of behavior labeled assertive-receptive behavior is highly inversely correlated with Factor II (-.903). This is curious because theoretically assertive-receptive behavior should measure behavior that is midway between assertive behavior and receptive behavior. This is further evidence of the existence of some problem in measuring the levels of the behavior variable.

Recommendations

Combining the levels of family orientation and peer orientation into one level, omitting personal orientation as a level, and renaming Factor I "other - orientation" (as compared to "orientation") seems an appropriate means of eliminating ambiguity in the measurement of the extent to which a subject is receptive to the opinions and values of others.

Clarification of items measuring commitment, assertive behavior and receptive behavior would be advised in order to eliminate confounding of commitment and assertive behavior evidenced in Factor II and of commitment and receptive behavior evidenced in Factor III.

The elimination of assertive-receptive behavior as a variable is advised. This level could be derived from scores on the assertive and the receptive levels. Presently the assertive-receptive level does not load to a meaningful positive extent on any of the factors.

Conclusions

It is apparent that the McDaniel questionnaire is not sufficiently developed for general use. The factor analysis indicates that there is considerable confounding of variables. The recommendations are that the levels of family

orientation and peer orientation be combined, that there be clarification of items measuring commitment and behavioral levels, and that assertive and receptive behavior be eliminated as a behavioral level. It is further recommended that an item analysis be performed for the purpose of determining which items are successful in discriminating between high and low scorers for each level of each of the variables. Elimination of nondiscriminating items should improve the clarity and utility of the questionnaire.

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